

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for tracking a prescription order through a pharmacy having a plurality of physically spaced apart locations for filling the prescription order including the following steps:

- 5 receiving the prescription order;
tagging the prescription order with a remote tag with read-writable memory, said read-writable memory coded with information about the prescription order;
manually moving the prescription order to at least one location;
automatically detecting the prescription order at the at least one location by
10 sensing the remote tag attached to the order; and,
determining said information about the prescription order from the remote tag.

2. The method for tracking prescription orders through a pharmacy of claim 1, further including the step of:

- 15 displaying the location of the prescription order on a computer system display, thereby facilitating the easy location of said prescription order.

3. The method for tracking prescription orders through a pharmacy of claim 1, further including the step of displaying said information about the
20 prescription order on a computer system display.

4. The method for tracking prescription orders through a pharmacy of claim 2, wherein said moving step includes moving said prescription order to at least three spaced apart locations within the pharmacy, and further including:

- 25 taking the prescription order from the customer at a first location;
entering data about the prescription order and customer into a computer system at a second location; and
storing the filled prescription order at a third location.

5. The method for tracking prescription orders through a pharmacy of claim 1, wherein said information about the prescription order includes the identity of a prescribed drug associated with the prescription order.

5 6. The method for tracking prescription orders through a pharmacy of claim 5, wherein said identity of a prescribed drug associated with the prescription order is the National Drug Code number of said prescribed drug.

7. The method for tracking prescription orders through a pharmacy of claim 1, further including the step of activating a transducer on the remote tag to signal a pharmacy worker.

8. The method for tracking prescription orders through a pharmacy of claim 1, wherein said pharmacy is a retail pharmacy.

15 9. The method for tracking a prescription order through a pharmacy of claim 8, further including the steps of:

transmitting the prescription order to a remote location;
filling the prescription order at the remote location;
20 adding said information about the prescription order to the read-writable memory of the tag at said remote location;
transferring the filled prescription order to the retail pharmacy for customer pickup; and,
wherein said determining said information about the prescription order from
25 the remote tag step occurs at the retail pharmacy .

10. A prescription order tracking system for use in a retail pharmacy having a first station therein for filling the prescription order, said tracking system including:

a computer system having a display;
a plurality of tags, each of which is operably secured to a different prescription order; and

5 a first tag reader positioned near the first station and in communication with said computer system, said first tag reader able to simultaneously detect the presence of said plurality of tags when said plurality of tags is in close proximity of said first tag reader and send a first signal to said computer system;

wherein said computer system processes said signal to display the presence of said plurality of tags at said first station, thereby displaying the location of each said
10 different prescription order.

11. The prescription order tracking system for use in a retail pharmacy of claim 10, wherein said plurality of tags each includes read-writable memory coded with information about one of each said different prescription order.

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12. The prescription order tracking system for use in a retail pharmacy of claim 11, wherein said information about one of each said different prescription order includes the identity of a prescribed drug associated with said one of each said different prescription order.

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13. The prescription order tracking system for use in a retail pharmacy of claim 12, wherein said information about one of each said different prescription order includes the National Drug Code number of said prescribed drug.

25 14. The prescription order tracking system for use in a retail pharmacy of claim 12, wherein said tag reader locates said plurality of tags through electromagnetic interrogation of a spatial region.

15. The prescription order tracking system for use in a retail pharmacy of claim 10, wherein said plurality of tags are RFID tags.

5 16. The prescription order tracking system for use in a retail pharmacy of claim 10, wherein said tag reader is an electromagnetic field generator, and said plurality of said tags are each an electromagnetic antenna.

17. The prescription order tracking system for use in a retail pharmacy of claim 10, wherein said tag is a transmitter for transmitting a signal, and said tag reader
10 is able to receive said signal.

18. The prescription order tracking system of claim 10, further including:
a second station spaced apart from said first station; and wherein said second station has a second tag reader positioned in communication with said computer
15 system, said second tag reader able to automatically detect the presence of said plurality of said tags when said plurality of said tags are in close proximity of said second tag reader and send a second signal to said computer system;
wherein said computer system processes said first signal and said second signal
to display the location of said plurality of said tags at one of said first and second
20 stations, thereby displaying the location of each said different prescription order.

19. The prescription order tracking system of claim 10, wherein said tag reader is hand-held.
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20. The prescription order tracking system of claim 10, wherein said prescription order is transferred to a remote filling facility, filled at the remote filling facility, combined with other prescription orders having tags to define a bulk shipment

having said plurality of tags, and said bulk shipment is delivered back to the retail pharmacy; and wherein,

said first tag reader simultaneously detects said plurality of tags of said bulk shipment, thereby allowing the computer system to automatically determine and track
5 the individual status of each prescription order in the bulk shipment.

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